

## 2017 VFP Resolutions

### **1. 2017-01 Bring The Bells Back To Balangiga, Samar, Phillipines (FAIL)**

Whereas, the American military occupied the Philippines on July 4, 1898, and began the conflict known in history as the Filipino-American war, and

Whereas, Filipino resistance to this occupation came to a head in the small town of Balangiga, Eastern Samar on September 28, 1901, where native fighters staged a surprise attack on Co. C, 9th US Inf. Reg. killing 74, and

Whereas, the American response to this encounter resulted in a “kill and burn” policy headed by Gen Jacob Smith and USMC Maj. Littleton Waller, which resulted in the deaths of 15,000 Filipinos above the age of 10, and

Whereas, Balangiga was occupied by the 11th US Infantry Regiment, who then took the bells as war trophies. The smaller bell was given to the US 9th Inf. Reg., now on display in Korea. The 2 larger bells are on display at Warren AFB, Cheyenne, Wyoming, and

Whereas, over the years negotiations between US President Bill Clinton and Philippine President Fidel Ramos occurred in the late 1990's, and as late as 2006 HCR 481 was introduced, but died in committee, and

Whereas, that since it has been 115 years since the bells were taken; and The Republic of the Philippines has been independent since July 4, 1946, the timing is right to renew efforts to bring them home;

Therefore Be It Resolved that Veterans for Peace supports efforts in both countries, (“in the spirit of peace and reconciliation in the Pacific”) to return the Bells to Balangiga ([www.bringthebellshome.com](http://www.bringthebellshome.com)), Samar, Philippines.

Submitted by Aaron M. Davis

Lifetime member VFP

### **2. 2017-02 End The War In Syria (FAIL)**

Whereas, the multiparty war in Syria continues as an intractable conflict after seven years of horrendous bloodshed and destruction, and a humanitarian and refugee crisis of extreme proportions, and

Whereas, Syria now is at high risk for a direct military confrontation between US and Russian forces, and

Whereas, foreign military forces from the US, Russia, Iran, Turkey, and Iran, as well as militias from Iraq, Afghanistan, Lebanon and other places now are engaged in fighting on the battlefields of Syria, and

Whereas the catastrophe of Syria has contributed significantly to the worldwide appeal and recruitment of Daesh/ISIS, and

Whereas a widespread and effective civilian antiwar movement to end the war in Syria has yet to emerge;

Therefore Be It Resolved that Veterans for Peace calls for:

1. The withdrawal of ALL foreign military forces from Syria, including those of the US, Russia and Iran and all others
2. Serious international diplomacy at the highest priority towards the goal of a negotiated settlement between warring Syrian parties Veterans for Peace members and supporters are urged to further their knowledge of the origin and ongoing development of the Syrian conflict by exposing themselves to news and opinion from a wide variety of sources and viewpoints, including those of Syrians themselves, and to avoid simplistic formulations of the complex conflict in Syria.

Be It Further Resolved that VFP members and supporters are urged to follow the VFP principle of “Healing the Wounds of War” by working with and contributing to humanitarian projects that provide urgently needed medical, shelter and educational assistance to the millions of Syrian refugees worldwide.

Submitted by Andrew Berman

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### **3. 2017-03 U.S - Democratic Peoples’ Republic of Korea Meeting (PASS)**

Whereas, the people of the Democratic Peoples’ Republic of Korea (DPRK) have been under threat of nuclear attack for more than 60 years, by the only country ever actually to carry out such an attack, and

Whereas, after the 9/11 attacks, President George W. Bush designated Iraq, Iran, and the DPRK as the world’s “axis of evil”, and

Whereas, following this, the US, assured by the UN inspection team that Iraq had no weapons of mass destruction, invaded Iraq, destroying it as a viable country, and

Whereas, the US Government then began discussing which country to invade next, including the DPRK among the candidates, and

Whereas, only then did the DPRK announce that it had nuclear capability, and

Whereas this strategy, called “nuclear deterrence”, while hateful, is used by all countries with nuclear capability, and

Whereas the DPRK, while using this strategy of nuclear deterrence, has also repeatedly stated its desire to negotiate a non-aggression pact with the US, and

Whereas we members of VFP-Japan and VFP-Ryukyu/Okinawa Chapter International (VFP-ROCK), living in regions where life would be obliterated in a nuclear war between the US and the DPRK, find this proposal eminently reasonable, and

Whereas, US President Donald Trump has stated, regarding DPRK Chairman Kim Jong Un, “If it would be appropriate for me to meet with him, I would absolutely. I would be honored to do it”, and

Whereas, while we disagree with much that Trump and Kim say and do, still this could be one positive thing these maverick political figures could pull off (for Trump, famous maker of deals, this could be the deal of a lifetime);

Therefore Be It Resolved that the “appropriate time” for this meeting is NOW, and we call on President Trump to meet with Chairman Kim, and negotiate a non-aggression (no first strike) agreement between the US and the DPRK.

Submitted by

Douglas Lummis

President, VFP-Ryukyu/Okinawa Chapter Kokusai (VFP-ROCK)

Endorsed by VFP-Japan and VFP-ROCK Chapters

#### **4. 2017-04 Okinawa: Keystone of Peace (PASS)**

Whereas, Okinawa, then the independent Kingdom of the Ryukyus, was in 1879 annexed by military force and made a prefecture of Japan, and

Whereas, in April, 1945, US forces landed on Okinawa, and on these small islands not only Japanese, American and allied military but also Okinawan (and some Korean) civilians were sacrificed, in the following numbers:

- Japanese soldiers: 65,908
- US and Allied soldiers: 12,520
- Okinawa residents (including civilian employees): 122,228
- Total: 200,656 (Okinawa Prefectural Government, 1976), and

Whereas, now, 72 years later, the US military continues to occupy Okinawa as “the Keystone of the Pacific”, and

Whereas, US military bases currently occupy 18.8% of Okinawa Island, and

Whereas, Futenma Marine Air Station was built in 1945 after bulldozers, protected by rifle-bearing infantry, cleared the land of homes, schools, shops, fields, and other evidences of human life, and

Whereas, based on these experiences, the Okinawan people, trusting their security to cultural exchange rather than military strength, seek, by closing all military bases, to transform their archipelago into a keystone of peace, and

Whereas, the US and Japanese Governments, ignoring this Okinawan aspiration, are trying to build a new airstrip and military port to relocate Futenma, by filling part of the bay at Henoko, a pristine coral garden, habitat of the endangered Dugong, and

Whereas, they aim to supplement this with helipads in the sub-tropical forest at Takae, to serve the accident-prone MV-22 Osprey, and

Whereas, given that over 70% of Okinawans oppose these plans, they are not going to be realized;

Therefore Be It Resolved that Veterans For Peace advises the United States Government to take the following steps immediately:

- Close Futenma Marine Air Station; return its land to the Okinawan people.
- Scrap the plan to construct a new base at Henoko;
- Return the forest at Takae to its natural state; take the MV-22 out of Okinawa

Submitted by

Douglas Lummis

President, VFP-Ryukyu/Okinawa Chapter Kokusai (VFP-ROCK)

### **5. 2017-5 WWII-Scale Mobilization To Restore A Safe Climate (PASS)**

Whereas, In the ten years since the first Veterans For Peace (VFP) Resolution on climate change, the level of greenhouse gas emissions has only increased, and

Whereas, this climate disruption has already become a major cause of war in Syria and elsewhere along with helping create the greatest refugee crisis since World War I, and

Whereas, the Pentagon “green-washes” its role as the largest institutional emitter of greenhouse gases in the world, and

Whereas, the bloated military budget is the only potential source of current funding large enough to undertake a timely switch to a carbon-free economy, and

Whereas, the military and militarized police illegally surveil and violently disrupt our peaceful protests in defense of the climate at Standing Rock and elsewhere, and

Whereas, saving civilization and much of complex life on Earth requires the immediate creation of a zero greenhouse gas emissions economy, a global effort to remove excess carbon and a broader campaign to create a just economy and democracy that works for all people (along the lines proposed by The Climate Mobilization (TCM - [www.climate mobilization.org](http://www.climate mobilization.org));

Therefore Be It Resolved that VFP reaffirms its commitment to save the climate, as well as to highlight the role of the Pentagon and military spending, and calls upon governments at all levels to:

(1) Declare a climate emergency and initiate a global, WWII-scale mobilization to restore a safe climate and build a sustainable economy.

(2) Immediately enact legislation that transforms the entire U.S economy to zero greenhouse gas emissions within 10 years or less.

(3) Initiate a domestic and global Marshall Plan for this just transition that guarantees quality jobs, housing, education and healthcare for all, ends mass incarceration and poverty, all to be funded by greatly reduced spending on the military and increased taxation on the wealthy as was done during World War II.

Submitted by Jim Driscoll

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## **6. 2017-6 Stop The Deportation Of U.S. Military Veterans (PASS)**

Whereas, the United States has always and continues to use the services of non-citizens in all branches of its military, and

Whereas, non-citizen U.S. military veterans are subject to deportation, when they have trouble with the law and those troubles are often related to their military service, i.e. PTSD, depression, TBI, drug and alcohol addiction, and

Whereas, deportation separates veterans from their families, prevents them from accessing their earned benefits and places them in countries where they are often unfamiliar with the language and customs;

Therefore Be It Resolved that Veterans For Peace urges its members and chapters to call upon the U.S. Congress to pass laws requiring all branches of the U.S. military to provide to all non-citizen service members, that desire it, complete information, materials and testing required for naturalization, so that they become fully naturalized citizens by their discharge date.

Submitted by Charles R. Powell

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Endorsed by VFP Chapter 63

## **7. 2017-7 Stop U.S. Cyber War Against North Korea (PASS)**

Whereas, in early 2014, President Obama “ordered Pentagon officials to step up their cyber and electronic strikes against North Korea’s missile program in hopes of sabotaging test launches in their opening seconds,” (NYT, March 4, 2017), and

Whereas, as a result of the secret U.S. cyberwarfare, also known as the “left of launch” program, the North’s medium-range missiles began to explode in midair at a remarkable rate, achieving nearly 90% failure rate in 2016, and

Whereas, such cyberattacks, probably launched by the U.S. Cyber Command, against the military command and control system of DPRK (North Korea)—causing substantial physical damage on the country’s missiles and military system—may constitute an illegal “use of force against the territorial

integrity” of another country, in violation of the UN Charter’s Article 2 (4), as well as a crime of aggression under international law, and

Whereas, such cyberattacks also violate the Korean War Armistice Agreement’s Article 2A(12), which requires the “Commanders of the opposing sides” to “enforce a complete cessation of all hostilities in Korea,” and

Whereas, such U.S. cyber warfare against North Korea’s missile program may cause a major accident in Korea or invite a cyber and/or conventional military retaliation by the North, which may well escalate into an open armed conflict, and

Therefore Be It Resolved, Veterans for Peace (VFP), meeting at its national convention in Chicago, Illinois, August 12, 2017...

- 1) Calls upon the U.S. government to offer an apology to DPRK, and stop its dangerous cyberattacks against the country immediately;
- 2) Calls upon the U.S. Congress to hold open hearings to find real truth about the reported cyberattacks against DPRK; and
- 3) Urges VFP members and local Chapters to send a copy of this resolution to their respective members of Congress.

Submitted by John Kim

VFP-Korea Peace Campaign

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Cosponsored by VFP-Korea Peace Campaign and VFP Chapter 109

## **8. 2017-8 Resolution on Normalization of US Relations with Hezbollah (PASS)**

Whereas, the United Nations and Veterans for Peace were established for the identical purpose of preventing war, and VFP positions should therefore support the UN Charter which prohibits “the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state”, and

Whereas, Hezbollah is an established political organization within the government of Lebanon, and

Whereas, the United States has supported Israel in armed aggression against Hezbollah, violating the territorial integrity and political independence of Lebanon, and

Whereas, Hezbollah has neither attacked or threatened to attack the United States, and

Whereas, Article 51 of the UN Charter establishes the right to self-defense, and

Whereas Hezbollah has mounted steadfast resistance against Israeli invasion, occupation and air attacks, to which it is entitled under international law;

Therefore Be It Resolved that VFP recommends that that the United States declassify Hezbollah as a “terrorist” organization and recognize it as a legitimate political party within the government of Lebanon and resistance organization opposing Israel’s illegal aggressions.

Submitted by Jack Dresser

National vice-chair, Palestine and Middle East Working Group, Veterans for Peace

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#### **9. 2017-9 (NOTE: Withdrawn) Board Participation In VFP’s Annual Convention (WITHDRAWN)**

Whereas, Veterans For Peace has held an annual convention for 30 years and expects to continue to do so, and

Whereas, each year the convention is hosted by a Veterans For Peace chapter in a different city, and

Whereas, the host chapter picks a chair who in turn enlists committee chairs, and

Whereas, the host chapter is given online guidelines from the national office and a debrief from the previous year’s host chapter, and

Whereas, few chapters have members with professional experience organizing and budgeting a five-day event, and

Whereas, the Veterans For Peace Executive Board meeting during the October preceding the August convention is held in the host city in part for the purpose of inspecting and approving the work completed to that point for the upcoming convention,

And Whereas, at that time much of the work the host chapter has done is subject to review, editing, and rejection by the Board (for instance the theme, logo, or venue), and

Whereas, at that time no board member has been specifically engaged with the host chapter’s convention planning, and

Whereas, other annual conventions of this size (by example The San Francisco Jazz Festival and the Navaro River String Camp) have a year round staff with experience and understanding of the upcoming convention;

Therefore Be It Resolved that one member of the Veterans For Peace Board be designated the Chair of the Annual Convention to oversee and coordinate the work of the convention chapter with the VFP Board and Staff, and

Be It Further Resolved that person retain this designation for three years, and Be It Still Further Resolved that convention or event management experience is a desirable qualification for election to the Veterans For Peace Executive Board.

Submitted by Denny Riley, Catherine Riley, and Paul Cox

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**Rejected Resolution** – Repeats items already approved by previous resolutions

**(2017) Resolution on Normalization of US Relations with Hamas**

Whereas the United Nations and Veterans for Peace were established for the identical purpose of preventing war, and VFP positions should therefore support the UN Charter which prohibits “the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state”, and

Whereas Israel from its beginning has denied the Palestinian Arab people their “equal rights and self-determination” as specified under Article 55 of the UN Charter, and Hamas is therefore limited to representing a stateless people for whom it has been the only legally elected government since 2006;

Whereas Israel’s occupation, blockade, armed attacks and economic sanctions are acts of war against an essentially captive and helpless population in violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention to which Israel and the US are signatories;

Whereas Article 51 of the UN Charter established the right to self-defense, and

Whereas Hamas has neither attacked nor threatened to attack the United States,

Therefore, Be It Resolved that VFP recommends that the United States declassify Hamas as a “terrorist” organization and recognize it as a legitimate resistance organization opposing illegal Israeli aggression.

Submitted by Jack Dresser

National vice-chair, Palestine and Middle East Working Group, Veterans for Peace

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Following approved resolution from 2014 asks the U.S. to remove Hamas as a terrorist organization

Palestine & Israel - 2014 Resolution On US Policy Towards - Approved by the VFP membership December 2014 (Submitted by Eduardo Cohen and Jack Dresser, VFP Working Group on Palestine and the Middle East)

Therefore Be It Resolved that Veterans for Peace encourages the US government to...Remove Hamas from the US list of terrorist organizations;

Following approved resolution from 2014 asks the U.S. government to recognize Hamas

Palestinian Rights Under International Law, Support Of - Approved at the 2011 VFP national convention – Portland, OR (Submitted by Eduardo Cohen –Chair: VFP Palestine Working Group)

Therefore Be It Resolved... 5.The U.S. government to acknowledge the majority representation won by Hamas in the Palestinian parliamentary election of January 2006 and to accept Hamas within the unity government of occupied Palestine .

## **Rejected Resolution – Does Not Follow Resolution Protocols**

Resolution on VFP Duty to Reduce Support for US Military Aggression by Exposing and Countering Propaganda

Whereas veterans have special standing in the public eye regarding matters of war; and

Whereas Veterans for Peace faces a formidable political adversary in the military-industrial-intelligence-surveillance-security state with its vast powers and profits contingent upon continuous war, and has long observed the essential role of misframing, disinformation and public fear generation in maintaining support for this destructive system by a heavily propagandized taxpaying population; and

Whereas, we recall the Gulf of Tonkin deception, the anti-Communist hysteria with its black-ops and proxy wars throughout South and Central America (against the latter of which VFP was formed), the Iraqi troops murdering babies from their incubators, the fictitious WMDs, yellowcake, Saddam/bin Laden collusion, and viagra-crazed rapist Libyan soldiers, and note today's relentless stream of horror tales about Assad and fabrications about Putin made perilous by the recently invented "responsibility to protect" (R2P) doctrine that ignores the UN Charter entirely; and

Whereas to be effective in our war-preventive mission, we must publicly identify, challenge and debunk these "weapons of mass deception" to delegitimize the US, NATO, and Israeli aggressions they support and without which they could not continue.

Therefore, Be It Resolved that:

- (1) The board of Veterans for Peace recognizes a duty to strategically leverage its public status and nationwide reach to influence public consciousness against US aggression; and
- (2) Veterans for Peace recognizes government dependency upon propaganda disseminated through print, broadcast, electronic and educational media in promulgation of war, a vulnerability potentially exploitable by strategic communication at modest cost; and
- (3) The board of Veterans for Peace, in consultation with its working groups and interested members, will prepare op-eds on significant and timely topics for submission to major newspapers, and will draft sample LTEs for distribution to VFP members nationwide for submission to their local papers; and
- (4) The board of Veterans for Peace, in consultation with its working groups and interested members, will prioritize budget use for public information platforms such as billboards, bus and print ads to inform the public as broadly and factually as possible of our anti-war positions.

Submitted by Jack Dresser

### **Does not follow...**

Resolution Protocol #7 (Resolutions calling for the national Veterans For Peace office to fund a project will be rejected by the Resolutions Committee simply due to a lack of funds by the organization. If a resolution proposes a project requiring funding, such funding should be done through the maker of the resolution).

Resolution Protocol #8 (Resolutions calling for work by the national Veterans For Peace office will be rejected by the Resolutions Committee simply due to a lack of staff. If a resolution proposes a person's time, such time and effort must be made through the efforts of the maker(s) of the resolution).

Also, proposed resolution received late on resolution deadline date leaving no time for the Resolution Committee to work with the maker of the document.